

■ Topics : Letters from alumni

Igor Mijailovic

Mitsubishi Corporation, Belgrade Liaison Office
(Formerly at the Faculty of Philology, Belgrade University)

I first went to Okayama University 2006 for a one-year Nikkensei Program under the supervision of Professor Ryoichi Tsusumi. The learnt a lot from my experience of studying at Okayama University and I came back in 2008 for an 18 months Research Program under supervision of Professor Suzuki .

Now, four years have passed since leaving Okayama and it is getting more and more difficult to say what part of Okayama I owe a greater feeling of thankfulness to: the university lecturers, my foreign student friends or the locals of the city.

The main goal of the Nikkensei Program was enhancement of Japanese language skills and I was put into classes with highly skilled foreign students. I had some previous knowledge of Japanese language but it was very tough at the beginning to catch up with others. But thanks to Tsutsumi sensei's patience, his great leadership and cooperation with his colleagues, I eventually became fluent and got the JLPT N1 certificate.

My practical knowledge of the Japanese language has already proved its value as an important tool in contributing to Japanese business through my work at Mitsubishi Corporation. In other words, my company duly recognizes Okayama University's important role in my education.

However, my stay in Okayama was not just school and study. I also enjoyed many other activities arranged by the University, such as visits to remote sightseeing spots, open sky lessons at Korakuen, and a multitude of happenings with Japanese students.



Visit to Abashiri, Hokkaido



Graduation day at Okayama University



Okinawa and the southernmost point of Japan.

The tranquil, non-metropolitan atmosphere of the City of Okayama provided us with the joyous and pure flavour of genuine Japan, which has vanished from the big cities. It is hard to find a better place in the world to make local friends. Their warm hospitality and gentle feelings of respect often offset any lack of communication tools.

It is not exaggeration to say that Okayama literally changed the direction of my life. I will utilize the personal and educational base that was able to establish at Okayama University in further contributing to the relationship between Japan and Serbia.